

## Looking back on a decade of progress

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a long track record of providing quality transportation for Wisconsin. By providing an effective and efficient transportation system, the department has helped Wisconsin's economy to prosper, its citizens to remain safe, and the environment to flourish.

The focus of the department is always the same, but the manner in how it accomplishes its goals may change. In particular, the department is using new technological advances, and achieving its accomplishments through a variety of partnerships and strong customer service.

## Keeping a healthy economy in motion through a multimodal network

Quality transportation is a vital element for the health and future growth of the statewide economy. Wisconsin's manufacturers ship large quantities of freight in trucks, trains, ships and planes. Millions of commuters use highways and transit systems to get to work each day. Tourists spend nearly \$7.7 billion in Wisconsin after arriving on trains, planes, boats and cars.

It's no coincidence that Wisconsin possesses one of the finest transportation networks in the country, and at the same time enjoys one of the most vibrant economies in the nation. Over the last decade, Wisconsin's state, federal and local partners, have recognized the vital link between the state's economic prosperity and a comprehensive, high-quality transportation system that can efficiently move both people and goods.

To keep Wisconsin's economy in motion as effectively and efficiently as possible, the state has made investments in all modes of transportation to provide all citizens and businesses with mobility choices.



## Highways

Wisconsin's highway network includes the 11,800-mile State Highway System, and over 100,000 miles of local streets and county roads.

Combined, Wisconsin highways handled nearly 57 billion vehicle miles of travel in 1999 – enough to make 800 round trips from the earth to the planet Mars!

The state invests heavily in maintaining its highways, and expanding the system where necessary, to ensure the smooth, uninterrupted flow of people and goods.

Since 1987, Wisconsin increased investment in the State Highway System by over 46% in real terms.

## Corridors 2020

In 1987, Governor Tommy Thompson launched the Corridors 2020 initiative to create a 3,650-mile network of safe and efficient high volume highways to provide accessibility from all areas of Wisconsin to national markets.

Today, these and other major sections of the Corridors 2020 backbone are complete:

⇒ US 53 expansion from Chippewa Falls to Superior completed in 1999.



- ⇒ WIS 29 expansion from Green Bay to Chippewa Falls completed in 2000.
- ⇒ US 41 freeway conversion from Fond du Lac to Green Bay completed in 2000.
- ⇒ Major portions of US 151 from Fond du Lac to Dubuque are completed, with the remainder to be opened by 2005.

## Local transportation

Local governments are a strong partner in providing transportation services. Recognizing this partnership, Wisconsin provides significant financial assistance to local governments for transportation.

- ◆ Almost 90% of Wisconsin's roadways are under local jurisdiction.
- ◆ In 1999, Wisconsin invested over \$86 million in 68 public transit services which carried over 77 million passengers.
- ◆ Since 1987, local assistance and aids have increased by 56% – far outpacing the total transportation budget growth!

Over the past decade, the state has undertaken a number of initiatives to make local road, bridge and transit funding even more efficient and effective.

Economic accomplishments

*"Wisconsin's leaders have long recognized the link between a strong transportation network and the needs of business and economic development. By increasing our investment in transportation, and by targeting new and expanding businesses through the Transportation Economic Assistance program, we've been successful in spurring strong economic growth throughout the state."*

*Ron Fiedler  
WisDOT Secretary, 1987-1991*

## Economic accomplishments

These range from the Local Road Improvement Program that aids facilities not eligible for federal aid, to the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, to Transportation Enhancements and others.

### **Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program**

Since 1987, Wisconsin has provided \$47 million in TEA grants to fund improvements for over 200 new or expanding businesses. These road and rail improvements have helped create over 46,000 jobs.

### **Passenger rail**

Wisconsin has experienced exciting growth in passenger rail.

Wisconsin successfully expanded the Chicago-Milwaukee *Hiawatha Service* in 1989,

adding two round trips resulting in sharply increased passenger levels. The state negotiated to keep the *Hiawatha Service* in 1995 in the face of potential abandonment of the service.

About 420,000 passengers used the *Hiawatha Service* in 2000, averaging over 1,150 passengers per day, more than double the amount in 1988.

### **Freight rail**

Wisconsin is home to 12 freight railroads operating over 4,500 miles of track. In 1998, these railroads combined to move over 1 million carloads – or 94 million tons – of coal, grain, paper, ore, lumber and other freight.

State investment has helped preserve rail service to small communities on over 600 miles of publicly-owned rail lines. Since 1986, WisDOT has awarded \$104 million in loans and grants for freight rail improvements.

### **Airports**

Aviation is an important element in keeping Wisconsin accessible to national and international markets.



Since 1986, Wisconsin has invested \$500 million in state airport projects across the state. These investments have led to a tremendous pay back: aviation generates over \$2.1 billion in economic activity *each year!*

Passenger enplanements at Wisconsin's airports rose from 2.9 million in 1987 to 4.5 million in 1999 – a 55% increase. State airports also handle 120,000 tons of air cargo each year.

### Harbors

Annually, ports along the Great Lakes and Mississippi River handle about 50 million tons of freight with a value of more than \$7 billion. Since 1986, WisDOT awarded \$29

million for 33 commercial port improvement projects along the Great Lakes and Mississippi River.

### Bicycle and pedestrian transportation

Bicycle and pedestrian traffic represent alternative transportation options, especially in urban areas, and for commuters or other travelers who do not own a motor vehicle. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can also help increase the attractiveness of areas or communities for tourists and visitors.

Wisconsin implemented several federal programs, along with state-funded rails-to-trails efforts, to improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

## Investing to keep up with demand

As Wisconsin's economy has grown, demand for transportation services has grown at even greater rates. In response, Wisconsin has invested heavily in its transportation system.

Since 1986, the state has made investments in its highway infrastructure worth \$7 billion, resulting in improvements to over 9,100 miles of highway. Over this same period, Wisconsin's overall funding for transportation increased by 44% in "real" dollars, after accounting for inflation. These investments have increased the reliability, capacity and accessibility of Wisconsin's multi-modal transportation network to meet the growing demands of the state's business and recreational travelers.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND OUTPACES ECONOMIC GROWTH

